

## **GROWTH THROUGH AGRICULTURE GRANT/LOAN PROGRAM**

### **Project Summary for Fiscal Year 2013**

**(July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013)**

The Growth Through Agriculture (GTA) program is a grant and loan program established by the Montana Legislature to strengthen and diversify Montana's agriculture industry through development of new agricultural products and processes.

The GTA program offers Category I funding in the form of a grant or loan or both and funding is determined by a seven member Agriculture Development Council (Council) during scheduled meetings two to three times a year. The Council is comprised of the Directors of the Montana Department of Commerce and Montana Department of Agriculture and five Montanans appointed by the Governor who are active in agriculture production.

The program also offers Category II Mini Grant funding with applications that are accepted on an open-cycle basis until all available funds are committed to approved projects. Project awards are determined administratively by the Montana Department of Agriculture.

### **Category I: Economic Development Projects**

Category I projects may potentially be funded in a single application for a total amount of \$150,000 in the form of grant funding up to \$50,000 and loan funding up to \$100,000. Examples of project activities involve equipment purchases, advertising and promotion, and consultant services such as engineering costs and feasibility studies.

#### **S & T Project Meats, Inc.**

A loan for \$53,688 to assist with equipment and construction costs associated with the expansion of the meat processing company in Billings, Montana.

#### **Montana Native Nursery dba Shady Groves Farms**

A grant for \$10,000 to assist with the purchase of blueberry plants for the establishment of a blueberry farm in Plains, Montana.

#### **The Community Food Co-op, Inc.**

A grant for \$50,000 to assist with equipment costs associated with the expansion of the Bozeman co-op's central kitchen facility to expand its ability to purchase and process produce from area growers for year round retail sales.

#### **Big Sandy Meat Shop, LLC**

A grant for \$7,700 to assist with the purchase of equipment associated with the expansion of the meat processing facility in Big Sandy, Montana.

**M & M Landscaping & Design, Inc.**

A grant for \$7,000 to assist with greenhouse and boiler costs associated with a pilot project for the nursery in Kalispell, Montana. The boiler would allow the company to use yard waste produced in its business to generate heat for the greenhouse nursery to grow plants for sale in Montana instead of importing from out of state.

**Little Red Hills, LLC**

A loan for \$24,182 to assist with the purchase of equipment associated with the start-up of the meat snack company to be produced in Columbia Falls, Montana.

**Flathead Lake Cherry Growers', Inc.**

A grant for \$5,080 to assist with website upgrades and additions to incorporate QR wholesale and retail coding, billboard costs, and point of purchase materials to promote and sell Flathead cherries.

**Thomas Britz dba Britz Ranch**

A grant for \$11,820 to assist with the development of a research plot near Whitefish, Montana to determine the economic viability of commercial hops production to meet the increasing demands for Montana-grown ingredients for the growing micro-brewery industry.

**Dell Center, LLC**

A grant and a loan for a total of \$30,000 to assist with the construction of a meat processing facility in Dell, Montana.

**Flathead Valley Community College**

A grant for \$18,200 to assist with consultant costs related for the development and implementation of a new multi-functional farm, agriculture entrepreneurship curriculum that will assist farmers and ranchers in developing additional income streams for their businesses in the Flathead Valley and Montana.

**Global Agro Commodities LLC**

A grant for \$50,000 to assist the company and its parent company, Bespoke Group, LLC that processes and exports pulse crops to India, with engineering costs and equipment purchases needed to renovate the Chester elevator from a wheat facility to a pulse crop facility.

**Great Northern Pasta Company, LLC**

A grant for \$49,900 to assist with equipment and construction costs associated with the expansion of the organic artisan pasta company in Whitefish, Montana.

**Headframe Spirits, Inc.**

A grant for \$33,250 to assist with marketing costs and software development costs that would assist the micro-distillery in Butte, Montana with regulatory reporting, inventory and production management.

**Kalispell Creamery**

A loan for \$35,570 to assist the family owned dairy and creamery of Kalispell, Montana with the purchase of rotary yogurt cup filler equipment in order to expand its product lines to include cottage cheese and yogurt products.

**Lake County Community Development Corporation & the Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center**

A grant for \$7,500 to assist the Food and Agricultural Development Center in Ronan, Montana with the completion of a market analysis study to determine the feasibility of a Western Montana value-added dairy cooperative.

**Lakeland Feed and Supply**

A grant for \$30,000.00 to assist the feed manufacturing and supply company of Hamilton, Alberton and Dillon, Montana, with the costs of ISO certification in order to improve its manufacturing processes, increase productivity and increase competitiveness to reach new customers.

**On the Rise Bakery**

A grant for \$24,000 to assist with the purchase and installation of an oven to assist with the expansion of the artisan bread producer in Bozeman, Montana.

**Western Montana Growers Cooperative**

A grant for \$7,665, to assist the cooperative which markets and distributes for 38 farms, with the completion of a feasibility study to address its growing warehouse and storage needs.

**Category II: Mini Grant Projects**

Category II projects may be funded a maximum amount of \$2,500 for any single application. The Mini Grant program was developed to encourage economic and agricultural development through educational, promotional, marketing, travel and other business activities.

**Truzzolino Tamale Shop, Inc.**

A \$2,500.00 grant was awarded to assist the tamale producer in Butte, Montana with trade show booth costs and oven equipment purchases in order to expand and market the business's product line to include pasties.

**Western Montana Specialty Foods, Inc.**

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Western Montana Specialty Foods, Inc. to assist the zucchini relish producer in Superior, Montana with equipment purchases to expand the business's production.

**Montana State University Extension**

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Montana State University Extension for educational materials, speaker fees and equipment costs associated with the implementation of the REAL Montana (Resource Education and Agriculture Leadership) educational program.

**Quality Foods Distributing, LLC**

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Quality Foods Distributing, LLC to assist with warehouse racking and shelving costs to enable the Bozeman-based distributor specializing in natural, organic, Made/Grown in Montana, and Northern Rockies Regional products in expanding markets for current and future Montana suppliers.

**Native Ideals Seed Company, LLC**

A \$1,500 grant was awarded to Native Ideals Seed Company, LLC to assist with the design, illustration and creation of seed packets and retail seed packet displays for the Montana native plant seed producer in Arlee to expand their retail sales product line.

**Montana Gluten Free Prairie, LLC**

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Montana Gluten Free Prairie, LLC to assist with packaging and labeling costs for the gluten-free manufacturer in Manhattan and Belgrade, Montana to expand their product line.

**Lewis and Clark County Extension**

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Lewis and Clark County Extension to assist with the purchase of an egg incubator and costs to host a poultry workshop.

**Polson Business Community**

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Polson Business Community to assist with advertising costs to promote the Cherry Festival in Polson, Montana.

**Community Food and Agriculture Coalition, Inc.**

A \$2,500 grant was awarded to Community Food and Agriculture Coalition, Inc. located in Missoula, Montana to assist with the completion of a feasibility study for the creation of a land-based incubator farm project.

**Montana Brewers Association**

A \$1,000 grant was awarded to Montana Brewers Association located in Helena, Montana to assist with marketing costs to develop, print and distribute the Montana Brewers Trail Map.